

INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES IN THE GUDE DRIVE-SOUTHLAWN LANE AREA

A special study

**Prepared by
the Montgomery County Planning Department**

**with the cooperation of
The City of Rockville's Department of Community Planning and Development Services**

April 1999

Background

Purpose

This policy paper addresses issues arising from the City of Rockville's annexations of land zoned for heavy industry in the vicinity of Gude Drive and Southlawn Lane and the subsequent effort to reclassify the land to a city zoning category that precludes heavy industrial uses. The primary issue involves determining if there is a need to maintain an inventory of such land. The immediate impetus for the study is two annexation petitions reviewed last year by the Montgomery County Planning Board and the County Council. The City supported the annexations and sought to place the properties in its Service Industrial Zone, because the City does not have a heavy industrial classification. The City has previously annexed property in the County's heavy industrial zone and reclassified it to the Service Industrial Zone, with the County's concurrence.

The Planning Board concluded that the petitions proposed land uses inconsistent with the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan and referred them to the County Council, which is required by state law to review annexation petitions when land uses that are not consistent with the master plan are proposed. The Council initially agreed and declined to approve zoning reclassifications that were part of the petitions. The Council, the City and the Planning Board subsequently agreed to the preparation of this policy paper as a means of resolving the issue.

In February 1999, the Council reconsidered its decision in one of the two cases, a property in the northeast quadrant of the Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane intersection owned by Louis H. Fanaroff and others. The Council concluded that the small size of the property and its location made it suitable for inclusion in the city's Service Industrial Zone, and it reversed its earlier decision on the zoning reclassification. The Council placed several restrictive conditions on its approval, including a requirement for specific intersection improvements prior to development of the property. The conditions reflect a concern about the effect of City annexations on the adequacy of the County's public facilities in the area adjacent to the annexation and on maintenance and operation of the local road network.

This paper reviews existing land use and zoning patterns in the Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane area with an emphasis on distinguishing light industrial from heavy industrial activities. It evaluates heavy industrial activities both in the study area and elsewhere in Montgomery County to determine the type of heavy industry in place, its land use characteristics and the ongoing need for such uses. The study also reviews relevant master plans for recommendations on heavy industrial land uses to show how policies towards such uses have evolved in recent years. It uses findings from these analyses to propose a joint policy on annexing land zoned for heavy industry into the City and on maintaining a critical inventory of land for heavy industry in the Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane area.

Executive Summary

This paper proposes a policy for the City of Rockville, the Montgomery County Planning Board and the Montgomery County Council to use in reviewing annexations of land zoned for heavy industrial uses in the Gude Drive–Southlawn Lane area. The policy is based primarily on the availability of heavy industrial land in the County and an analysis of land use and zoning patterns in the study area. The analysis focuses on differentiating light industrial from heavy industrial activities and includes reviews of other issues—comparison of industrial zones in the City and the County; countywide land use patterns in the County's heavy industrial zone; local trends in heavy industrial activities; and the treatment of heavy industrial land uses in County master plans.

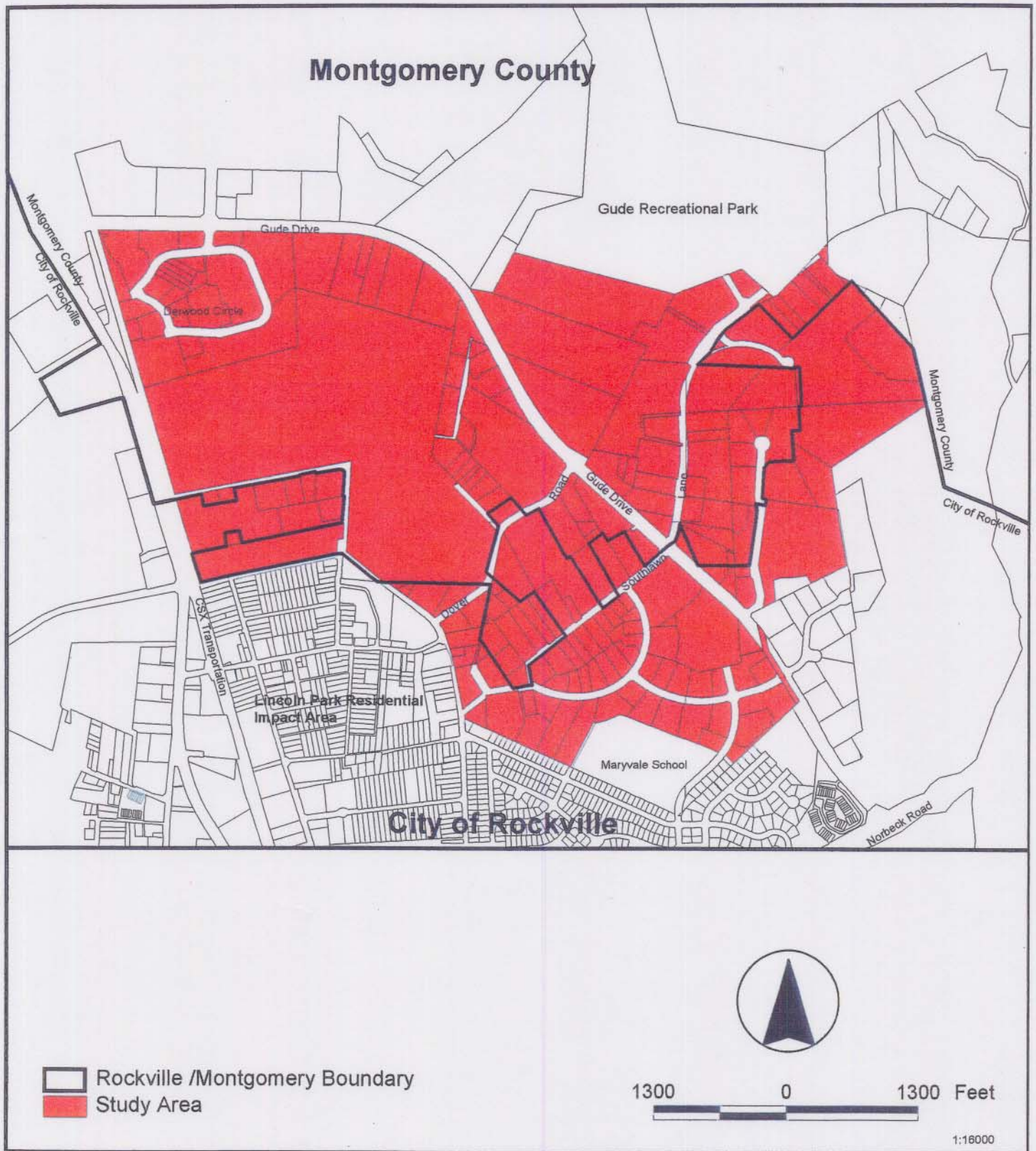
The paper's review of land use and zoning patterns in the study area determines that light industrial activities are found throughout the study area, in both the County's heavy industrial zone and the City's service industrial zone, which allows a range of light industrial, service and retail uses but few heavy industrial uses. It concludes that two areas in particular—the area bounded by Gude Drive, Dover Road and the Old Dover Road right-of-way, and an area south of Dover Road and north of Southlawn Lane—are predominantly light industrial in character. A third area along Southlawn Lane east of Gude Drive is primarily heavy industrial in character.

Analysis of the City's Service Industrial (I-1) Zone and the County's Heavy Industrial (I-2) Zone confirms an initial hypothesis that the two zones are dissimilar in the ranges of uses they permit and shows that the City zone is tailored to light industrial and service uses. A look at other I-2 zoned land in the County shows that the majority of this land is devoted to mineral extraction or utility operations and that the study area is the only part of the county with zoning, ownership and use patterns suitable for heavy industrial activities. Those activities represent a small share of the County's overall economy, but a share that has been stable over time and represents an important ongoing contribution to the local economy.

Finally, County master plans have, over time, taken a mixed approach to heavy industrial uses. Some plans covering areas with existing heavy industrial uses have recommended that those activities continue. Others have created overlay zones that allow heavy industrial uses to continue, but also encourage other commercial and retail uses. And in one significant case, a master plan recommended reclassification of all heavy industrial land in a planning area to light industrial or commercial zones. This history suggests that finding more land in the County for heavy industry will be extremely difficult.

The paper proposes a policy of supporting annexations in the part of the study area west of Gude Drive because the generally light industrial character of the area is in keeping with the City's Service Industrial Zone. It recommends that all of the area east of Gude Drive except the immediate intersection of Gude Drive and Southlawn Lane remain in the County's heavy industrial zone, or be placed in a comparable zone that could be proposed by the City, as a means of retaining land for such uses.

Study Area



Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane Special Study

The Study Area

The study area is shown on the accompanying map and includes the non-residential land in the Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane vicinity. It totals about 594 acres of land, excluding rights-of-way. A portion of the Study Area is in the City of Rockville; the remainder is in an unincorporated part of Montgomery County and is in the Upper Rock Creek Planning Area. This portion is within the City of Rockville's Urban Growth Area. The Montgomery County part of the study area (about 400 acres) includes such light industrial uses as warehousing, auto-related services and skilled crafts, such heavy industrial uses as recycling and scrap processing and a range of other uses including bakeries, dry cleaners and carpet sales and installation. The Montgomery County uses are in the County's I-1 (Light industrial) and I-2 (Heavy industrial) zones. The City of Rockville portion (about 200 acres) includes a wide range of service and retail uses as well as light manufacturing and warehousing, all in the City's I-1 (Service industrial) Zone. The City maintains an I-2 Zone, but it is a light industrial zone that provides space for certain light manufacturing, warehousing and wholesaling facilities.

Two thoroughfares—Gude Drive and Southlawn Lane—serve the study area. Gude Drive is a divided, four-lane highway that runs generally east and west and connects MD 355 (Frederick Road) with MD 28 (Norbeck Road). Businesses along Gude Drive are reached directly from the street, or by using a service road located on the west side of the street. Southlawn Lane is a two lane industrial road that runs generally north and south. Businesses along Southlawn Lane are reached directly from the street.

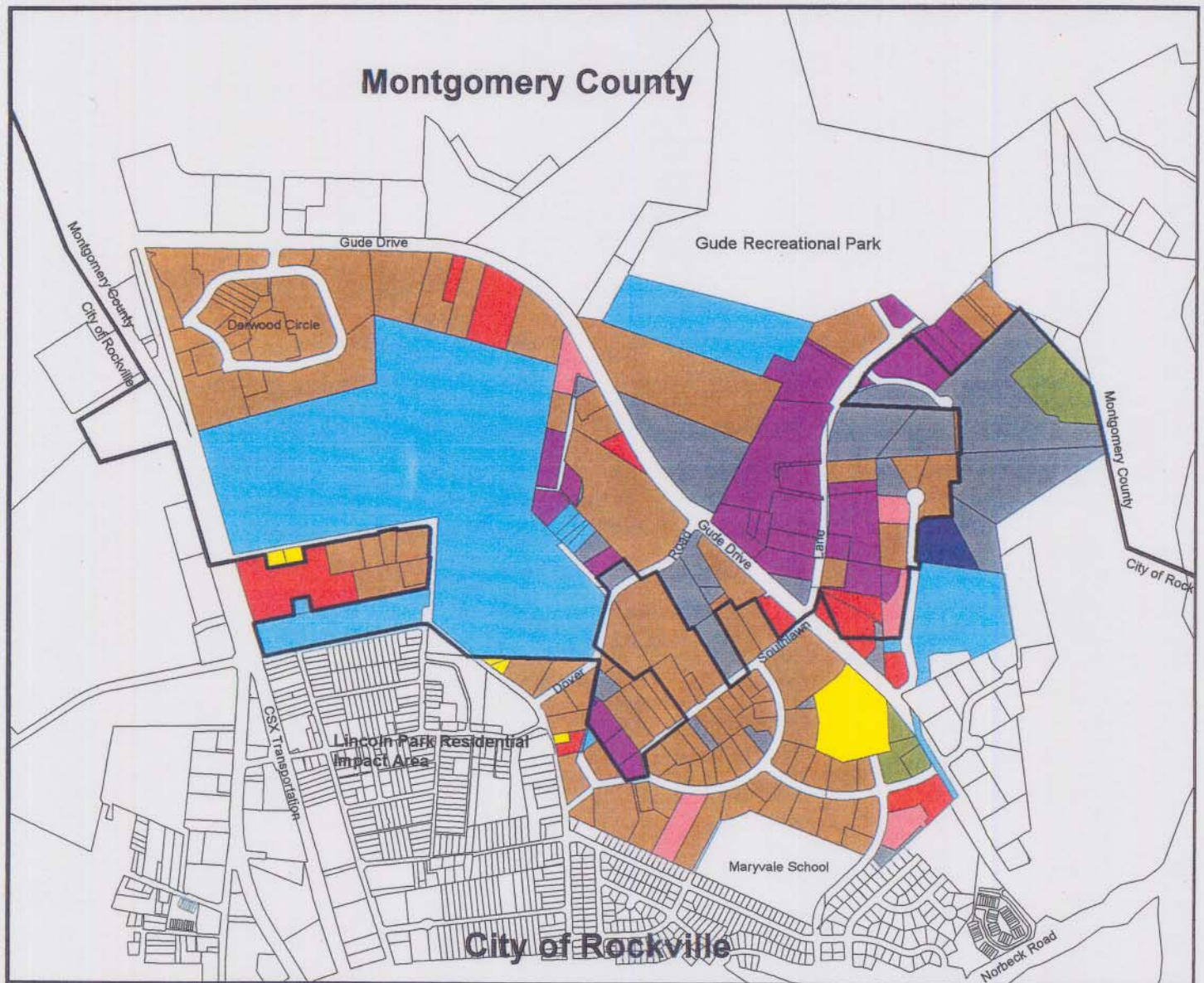
Annexations in this vicinity have been an area of concern since the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan was approved in 1985. That Plan recommended that the City of Rockville and the County devise a memorandum of understanding on annexation issues and on maximum expansion limits as a means of addressing adequate public facilities issues. In 1992 such an agreement, which also included the City of Gaithersburg, was concluded. The agreement committed the city councils, the County Council and the Executive to a cooperative effort to devise urban growth area boundaries that would guide planning for land use and community facilities, for capital investment and for establishing logical and efficient service areas.

The City has annexed a number of parcels in this area at the request of their owners. In the last two decades, the City has approved eight annexation petitions in the study area, adding about 52.4 acres to the City. Of the eight, six resulted in land being reclassified from the County's I-2 Zone to the City's Service Industrial Zone, removing 10.25 acres from the County's inventory of heavy industrial land.

The Land Use Inventory

Most uses in the study area are light industrial—small manufacturing or assembly and skilled crafts such as cabinetry, roofing and sign making, storage uses or auto-related activities—engine and body repair as well as auto towing, parts sales and auto recycling.

Land Uses



- Rockville/Montgomery Boundary**
- Land use**
- Residential
 - Heavy Industrial
 - Light Industrial
 - Public/Institutional
 - Retail Trades
 - Offices
 - Recreation
 - Vacant Land
 - Transportation, Communications, Utilities

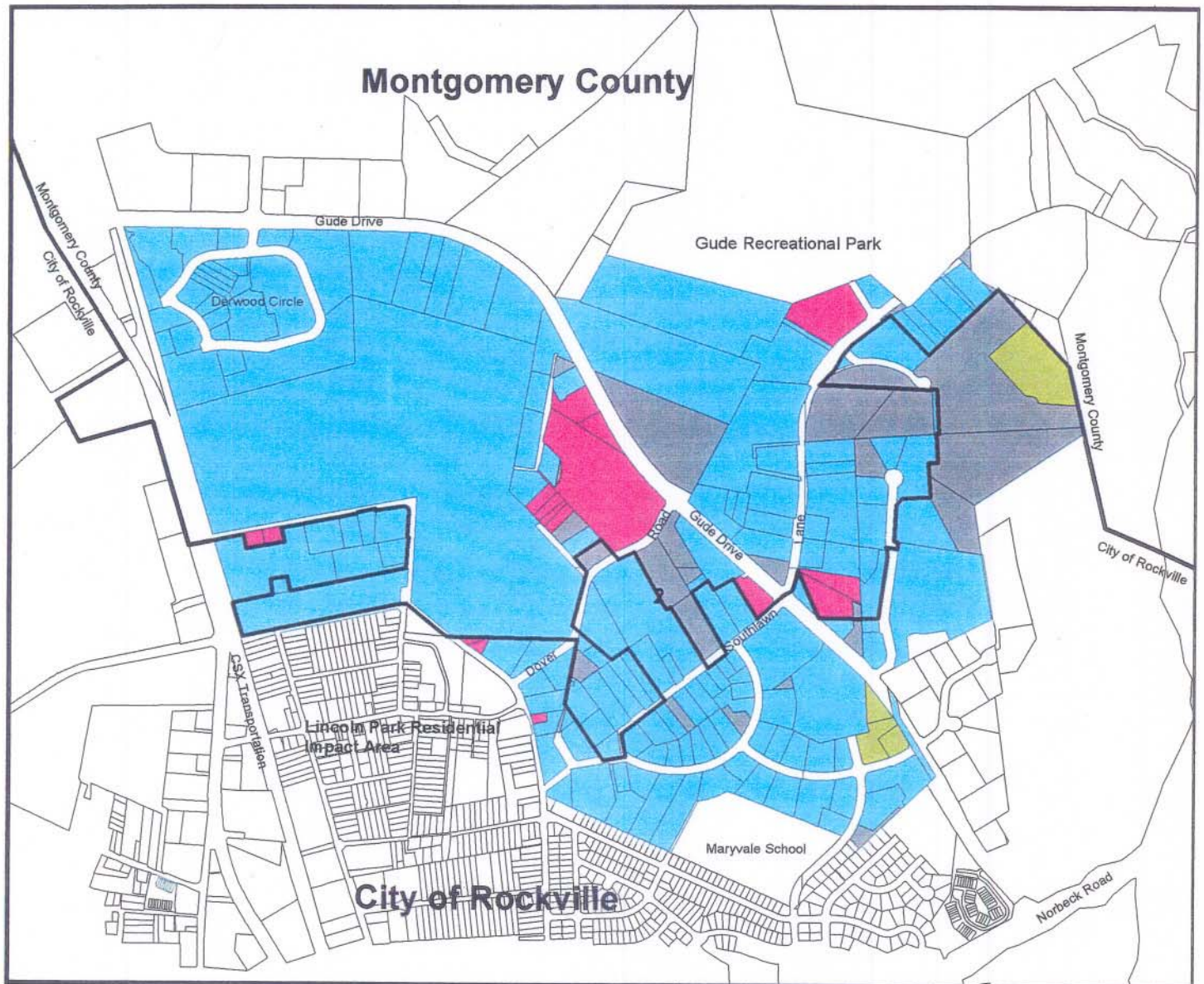


1300 0 1300 Feet

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Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane Special Study

Land Use Status in Respective Zones



Rockville/Montgomery Boundary

Recreational
Vacant Land

Use Not Permitted in Zone
Use Permitted in Zone



1300 0 1300 Feet

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Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane Special Study

(The Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance considers auto repair and parts sales to be retail trades; towing and storage of cars to be transportation uses and auto recycling to be a heavy industrial use.) Heavy industrial uses, such as fuel storage, metals and auto recycling, solid waste transfer and asphalt or concrete mixing, are concentrated along Southlawn Lane, north of its intersection with Gude Drive.

The southeast quadrant of the intersection of Gude Drive and Southlawn Lane contains the Burgundy Park retail center, which is partially located in the City of Rockville and partially in Montgomery County. The City's portion of the center is in the I-1 Zone, which permits retail uses. The County's portion is in the I-2 Zone, which does not. The center was developed at a time when the I-2 Zone included a range of permitted retail uses.

Of the 594 acres in the primary study area, 170 acres (29 percent) are in transportation, communications or utilities uses, 154 acres (26 percent) are in storage uses, 53 acres (9 percent) in heavy industrial uses, about 42 acres (8 percent) in light industrial uses and about 33 acres (6 percent) in retail uses. Other uses account for 41 acres (7 percent) and 94 acres (16 percent) are vacant. These calculations are based on field surveys and analysis of land uses in the study area.

Two areas in particular should be highlighted. While all of the area bounded by Gude Drive, Dover Road and the old Dover Road right-of-way is in the I-2 Zone, relatively little of it is in traditional heavy industrial uses. Instead, properties along Gude Drive include auto-related services, self-storage and printing. Auto recycling, towing and manufacturing uses are located along the old Dover Road right-of-way, and have no direct access to Gude Drive. Properties in this part of the study area are relatively small, with one exception, a 14.73-acre self-storage facility on Gude Drive.

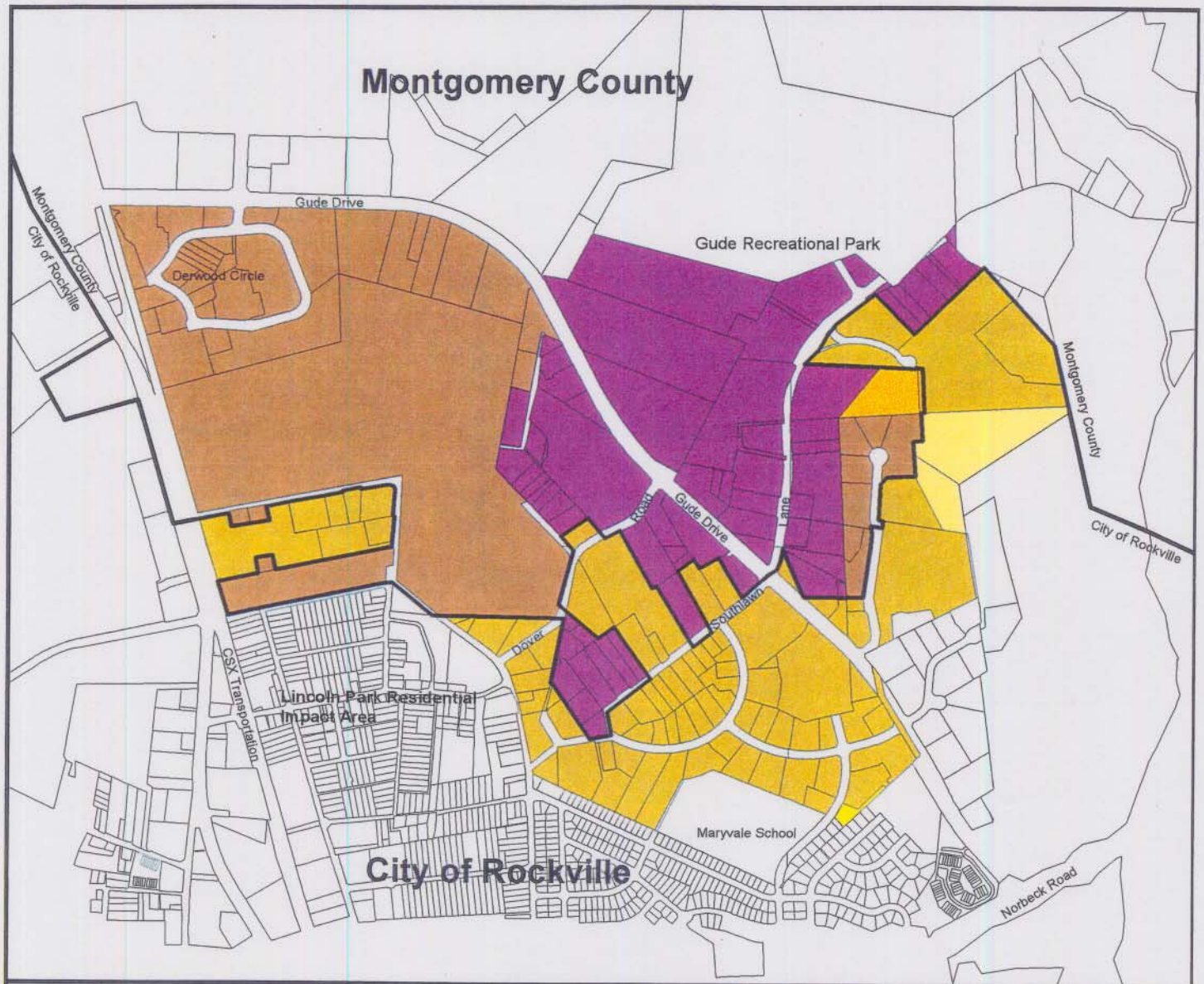
South of Dover Road, the Rockville boundary creates an area of unincorporated land that is virtually surrounded by the City. While this area is in the I-2 Zone, its land use pattern is mixed. Auto-related services, light assembly and skilled tradesmen are located in the simple single-story structures that are the dominant building type in the study area. An auto parts and car recycling firm is located in this area, as is a trash hauler.

While there is a distinct mix of uses in the study area, it is important to acknowledge that, with several exceptions, the land uses found on individual properties are permitted in the zones in which the properties are located. Two self-storage facilities, one on Gude Drive and the other on upper Southlawn Lane, are not now permitted uses, nor is the portion of the retail center at Gude Drive and Southlawn Lane that is in Montgomery County. The auto towing uses on Old Dover Road also are not permitted in the I-2 Zone.

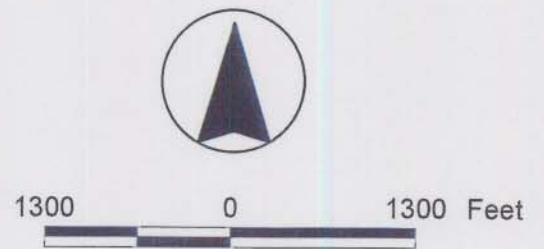
Land Use Issues

Development of a suitable policy for annexations of heavy industrial land in the study area should be undertaken in a countywide context. Annexation of I-2 zoned land by the City of Rockville has a direct impact on the County's ability to provide land for heavy industrial

Zoning



- Rockville/Montgomery Boundary
- Zoning**
- I-1 Light Industrial
 - I-2 Heavy Industrial
 - I-4 Low Intensity Light Industrial
 - I-1 Rockville Service Industrial
 - R-75 Rockville One-Family Detached
 - R-S Rockville Suburban Residential



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Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane Special Study

uses. This section will look at four related issues: land uses in the County's I-2 Zone and the City's I-1 Zone; locations and land uses in the I-2 Zone outside of the study area in Montgomery County; local trends in heavy industrial activities; and the treatment of heavy industrial land uses in recent County master plans.

Uses in the County's I-2 and the City's I-1 Zones

The Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance notes that there is a fundamental distinction between light industrial and heavy industrial uses and it notes that the distinction "involves the character of the industrial development." The ordinance acknowledges the fact that heavy industrial uses require larger sites and locations near specialized transportation links, such as rail lines or major highways. Light industrial uses generally involve smaller scale industrial activities that include research and development, warehousing and manufacturing.

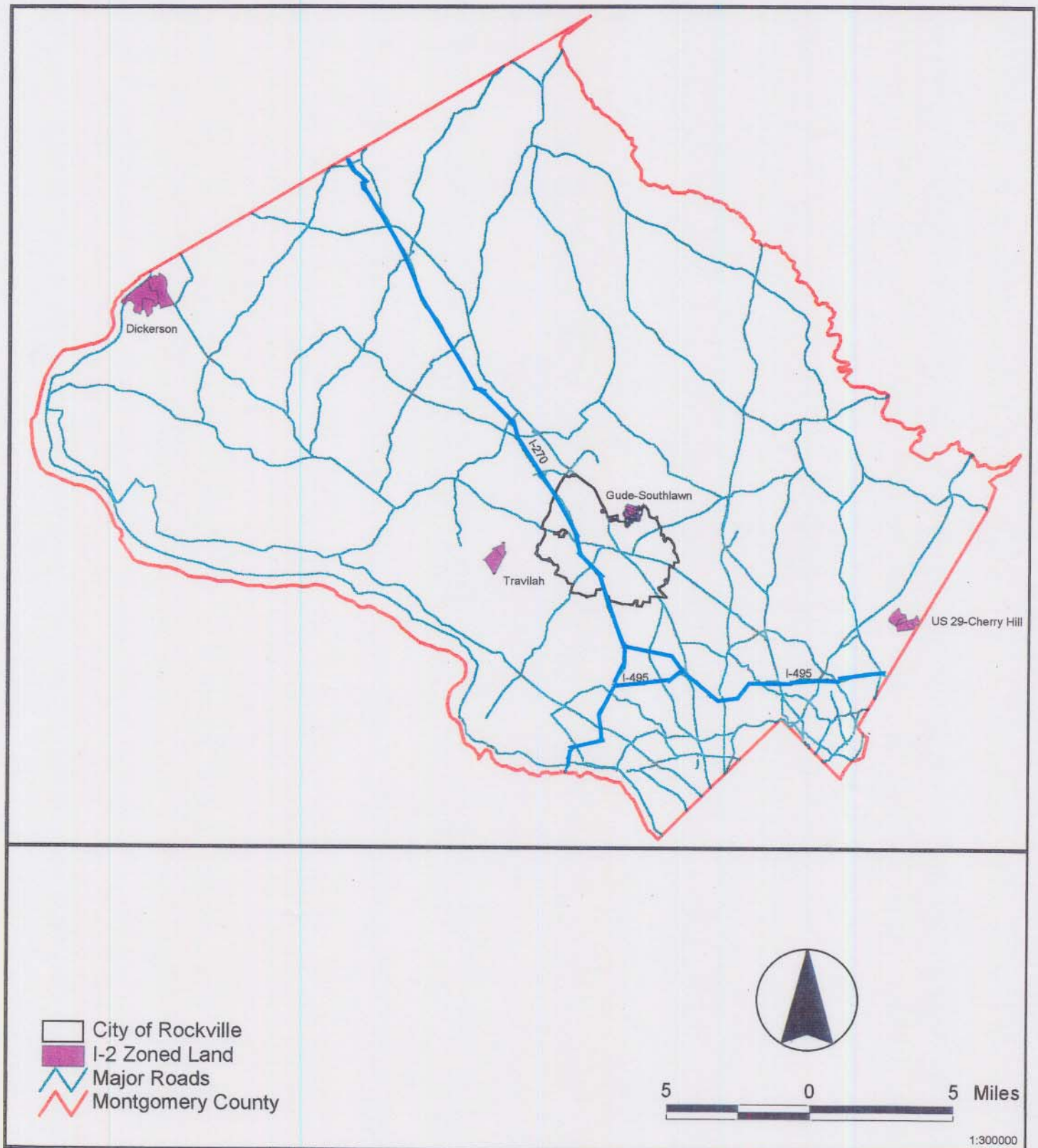
The City's Service Industrial (I-1) Zone is designed "to provide space for certain industrial uses necessary to serve residents of the City and surrounding areas and to provide general wholesaling and retailing facilities for certain commodities appropriate in an industrial zone." The list of permitted uses in the zone includes, among other uses, a range of retailing uses, including antiques; garden supplies; paint and wallpaper; photographic supplies; a range of animal services that include pet grooming; a range of automotive services, including indoor and outdoor motor vehicle sales, some types of filling stations and sales of car parts; offices that do not deal directly with the general public; general warehousing and such miscellaneous uses as greenhouses. The zone permits restaurants by special exception in multi-tenant buildings.

The City's Zoning Ordinance lists 11 manufacturing and processing uses permitted by right or by special exception in the I-1 Zone, including manufacture of cinder blocks, dry cleaning plants, assembly of electrical components, machine shops and blacksmiths. The ordinance prohibits heavy industrial uses and specifically excludes manufacture of a wide range of commodities, from acetylene and ammonia through corrosive acids, tallow and tar.

The County's I-2 Zone allows production of many, but not all, of these commodities. The zone permits 22 defined heavy industrial uses, including manufacture of non-corrosive chemicals, metal fabrication plants and dye works, almost all of which are not allowed in the City's I-1 Zone. The I-2 Zone allows 23 light industrial uses. Many of these, such as food production, paper products manufacturing and assembly of mobile or modular homes, also are not allowed in the City's I-1 Zone. At the same time, the I-2 Zone permits almost no commercial or service uses. It excludes automobile sales and service, eating and drinking establishments, animal boarding, child care facilities and laboratories, all of which are permitted in the City's I-1 Zone.

In general, the County's I-2 Zone does not permit self-storage facilities or auto repair. Gasoline filling stations are permitted by special exception if they existed in 1989. The I-2

Heavy Industrial Land



Gude Drive--Southlawn Lane Special Study

Zone also does not permit retail activities. A map showing the use status of properties in the study area accompanies this study.

The I-2 Zone in Montgomery County

The Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane district is one of four areas of I-2 zoned land in the County. The other three areas, shown on the Industrial Areas map, are: the US 29/Cherry Hill Road employment area in Fairland; Travilah in the Potomac Subregion; and Dickerson in the Agricultural Reserve. These areas total 835 acres of land in the I-2 Zone.

These three areas are devoted exclusively to mineral extraction or activities related to public utility operations. The Percontee Inc. gravel washing operations in Fairland total 156 acres; Rockville Crushed Stone's quarrying activities in Travilah total 273 acres. The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission operates Site 2, a sludge composting facility, in Fairland and a PEPCO generating station is located in Dickerson. Public utility operations in the three heavy industrial areas total 406 acres.

With the majority of the County's heavy industrial land devoted to mineral extraction or publicly owned, the Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane study area takes on increased importance. There are more lots and more owners in the study area and, as a result, the land is put to a wider variety of industrial uses than elsewhere in the County. Some vacant land also can be found in the study area, while there is little vacant heavy industrial land elsewhere in the County. It should also be noted that the creation of additional heavy industrial land would face significant hurdles.

Local Trends in Heavy Industrial Land Uses

While a detailed analysis of current trends in heavy industrial activities in Montgomery County is considerably beyond the scope of this paper, a general idea of the direction such activities have taken in recent years may be useful in understanding their role in the County. One way to get a "back of the envelope" picture of heavy industry in the County over time is to review the United States Census publication *County Business Patterns*, a yearly publication that provides state and local economic data by industry and can be used for charting economic changes over time.

Employment and establishment data in six representative industrial classifications—mining, highway construction, chemical manufacturing, stone, clay and glass products, fabricated metal products and trucking/warehousing—were gathered for four years—1974, 1984, 1994 and 1996, the last year for which information is available. These representative industries also meet the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance's definition of uses of a heavy industrial nature.

It should be noted that these industries represent a very small fraction of the County's business establishments and workers. In 1974, these industries totaled 125 of the County's more than 10,000 business establishments; in 1996, they totaled 221 of the more

than 23,000 business establishments. Nonetheless, these industries play an important continuing role in the overall County economy. In 1996, for example, these industries supported annual payrolls of more than \$100 million.

The picture that emerges from this broad evaluation is generally one of stability. The largest increase occurs in the trucking/warehousing category, which included 70 businesses in 1974 and 162 in 1996. Much of that increase occurred between 1984 and 1994 and reflects a dramatic rise in courier services, which represent the strong majority of all trucking firms in the County. A more typical example is the chemical industry, which included nine firms in 1974 and 17 in 1996. Much of that increase occurred recently; in 1994, there were 11 chemical firms reported in the County.

The concrete, gypsum and plaster products subcategory of stone, clay and glass products perhaps provides the best example of trends in heavy industrial activities. This subcategory, which is represented in the study area, included eight firms in 1974, nine in 1984, eight in 1994 and nine in 1996, reflecting the stability of heavy industry in Montgomery County.

This broad analysis suggests a small but stable economic sector. Growth in the sectors evaluated, while small, suggests that there is merit in maintaining, if not increasing, an inventory of land to accommodate it. Certain sectors, concrete mixing and highway construction, for example, require good access to highways or locations away from residential or neighborhood commercial centers.

Heavy Industrial Uses in Recent Master Plans

Since 1980, heavy industrial uses have been evaluated in four Master Plans: the *1980 Master Plan for the Potomac Subregion*; the *1980 Functional Master Plan for the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space*; the *1982 Westbard Sector Plan*; and the *1997 Fairland Master Plan*. The Potomac Subregion and Ag plans recommended that industrially zoned land remain in place and that current land uses continue.

The Westbard Plan recognized that the proximity of industrial activities to residential neighborhoods in the sector plan area results in conflict between the two. "The importance of these [industrial] goods and services to the proper functioning and welfare of the community," the Plan stated, "must be weighed against the appropriateness of their location in a residential area." Early drafts of the Plan evaluated a number of analysis areas that included land in the I-2 Zone and made individual recommendations for retaining the I-2 Zone or reclassifying the land to the I-1 (Light industrial) zone. The Council resolution approving the Plan, which reflects Council deliberations on land use issues, eliminated all land in the I-2 Zone—42 acres—from the Westbard Sector Plan area.

The Fairland Plan evaluated land in the I-2 Zone as part of an overall discussion of the US 29/Cherry Hill Road Employment Area. The Plan noted the existence of four industrial zones in the area with differing development standards and allowable uses, which, along

with the age of some buildings, "lends an overall impression that the area is unplanned, rather than a high-tech or office employment center."

The Plan highlighted WSSC's composting facility at Site 2, recognizing that odors from the facility have been a "a continuing problem for residents and businesses in this area," and that its presence "has had severe negative economic consequences, reducing the commercial viability" of neighboring light industrial and office activities. The availability of alternative technologies available for treating biosolids and the ongoing odor problems, the Plan stated, "suggest that Site 2 be considered for phase-out as soon as a long-term replacement program is adopted..." WSSC's commissioners recently voted to end operations at the facility.

The Plan also discussed the Percontee sand and gravel operations, recognizing the development potential of the area once activities related to mineral extraction are no longer viable. The Plan recommended reconfirming the I-2 Zone for the Percontee operations.

The Plan's overall recommendation for the employment area was development of an overlay district that would enable the area to diversify and become self-supporting. In 1997, the Council approved creation of the US 29/Cherry Hill Road Employment Area Overlay Zone. The Overlay Zone is designed to develop a compatible mix of office, regional commercial and light industrial uses in the employment area; establish uniform development standards for the area; allow local and regional retail and service uses; encourage traffic limiting measures and eliminate incompatible uses. Heavy industrial uses allowed in the I-2 Zone continue to be permitted in the overlay district and no land in the I-2 Zone was reclassified.

The 1985 Upper Rock Creek Plan did not examine comprehensively heavy industrial uses in the planning area. The Plan acknowledged the continuing importance of maintaining an inventory of light industrial land in the County, but stated that the desirability of increasing industrial land in the planning area had to be balanced against the land use impacts of such expansions on the residential character of Upper Rock Creek. The Plan also evaluated a 49-acre parcel off Southlawn Lane that had been previously recommended for residential uses to provide a transition between heavy industrial uses and Rock Creek park. The Plan recommended light industrial uses in the I-4 Zone, in part because access issues made the parcel unsuitable for residential uses and in part to increase the inventory of light industrial land in the County. The Plan indicated that environmental considerations, in particular water quality in this part of the Rock Creek watershed, made this property unsuitable for heavy industrial uses. A portion of the site was subsequently annexed by the City of Rockville and is now in the City's I-1 Zone.

Citizen Participation

The City's Department of Community Planning and Development Services sponsored a community meeting at the Lincoln Park Community Center on March 25, 1999. Residents of the Lincoln Park neighborhood joined owners of industrial property in the area to the

impact of industrial development on the Lincoln Park neighborhood. Residents and businesspeople raised a number of issues concerning development, zoning regulations, traffic and code enforcement.

In particular, they supported continuing light industrial development west of Gude Drive, saying that it provided a buffer between their residences and heavier industrial development to the east. Gude Drive, they said, should act as a dividing line between the two types of industrial uses. At the same time, they expressed concerns about potential development of the WINX property on Ashley Avenue, which is directly adjacent to Lincoln Park. Participants also criticized the agreement governing provision of public water and sewer service between the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission and the City, saying that it unfairly requires properties outside WSSC's service district to request annexation into the City in order to receive public water and sewer service. The agreement in practice has left some land to develop on wells and septic systems, which, in turn, has limited their development potential. Some suggested that recreation and retail uses were appropriate for the County's industrial zones.

Meeting participants also urged that regulations prohibiting trucks in the residential neighborhoods be more strictly enforced and that both the City and County should more stringently enforce regulations on illegal dumping in the study area. Some participants felt that Gude Drive's evolving role as a commuter route made areas along the road less suitable for heavy industrial uses. Residents urged that any consideration of new zones in the area include restrictions designed to protect nearby residential communities.

Overall Findings

Field research, data analysis and evaluation of heavy industrial activities countywide lead to four overall findings:

The Land Use Inventory

- 1 Within the study area itself, land in the I-2 Zone supports a mixture of heavy and light industrial uses. Heavy industrial uses are concentrated in concrete mixing, auto recycling, scrap metal processing and heavy construction activities. A range of light industrial uses, including auto-related uses, warehousing and light assembly or manufacturing uses, also is present.

Properties east of Gude Drive remain suitable for heavy industrial uses. These properties can be reached by trucks from Gude Drive or are large enough to support certain heavy industrial activities. Those properties in the I-2 Zone along Southlawn and Mason lanes are less suitable for heavy industrial uses because of their proximity to the residential Lincoln Park community. The area west of Gude Drive and along Dover Road, which is in largely light industrial uses, also is less suitable for heavy industrial uses,

because properties along Dover Road and the Old Dover Road right-of-way cannot be easily reached by large trucks.

Uses in the County's I-2 and the City's I-1 Zones

2. A comparison of uses in the city's Service Industrial (I-1) Zone and the County's Heavy Industrial (I-2) Zone confirms differences in the zones' expressed purposes as well as their rosters of permitted uses. It is clear from the City's Zoning Ordinance that its Service Industrial Zone does not anticipate that a wide range of defined industrial uses will occur within its boundaries. The County's Heavy Industrial (I-2) Zone, on the other hand, as clearly contemplates the need for a variety of manufacturing, processing and industrial uses in designated areas of the County. Retaining heavy industrial uses in parts of the study area enables needed activities to continue and provides an appropriate location for them.

The I-2 Zone in Montgomery County

3. As a review of the countywide inventory of I-2 land shows, the majority is committed to mineral extraction or public utility operations. The Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane area, with smaller parcels and many owners, is the only location in the County that contains vacant and developable land suited to the full range of uses permitted in the I-2 Zone.

Heavy Industrial Uses in Recent Master Plans

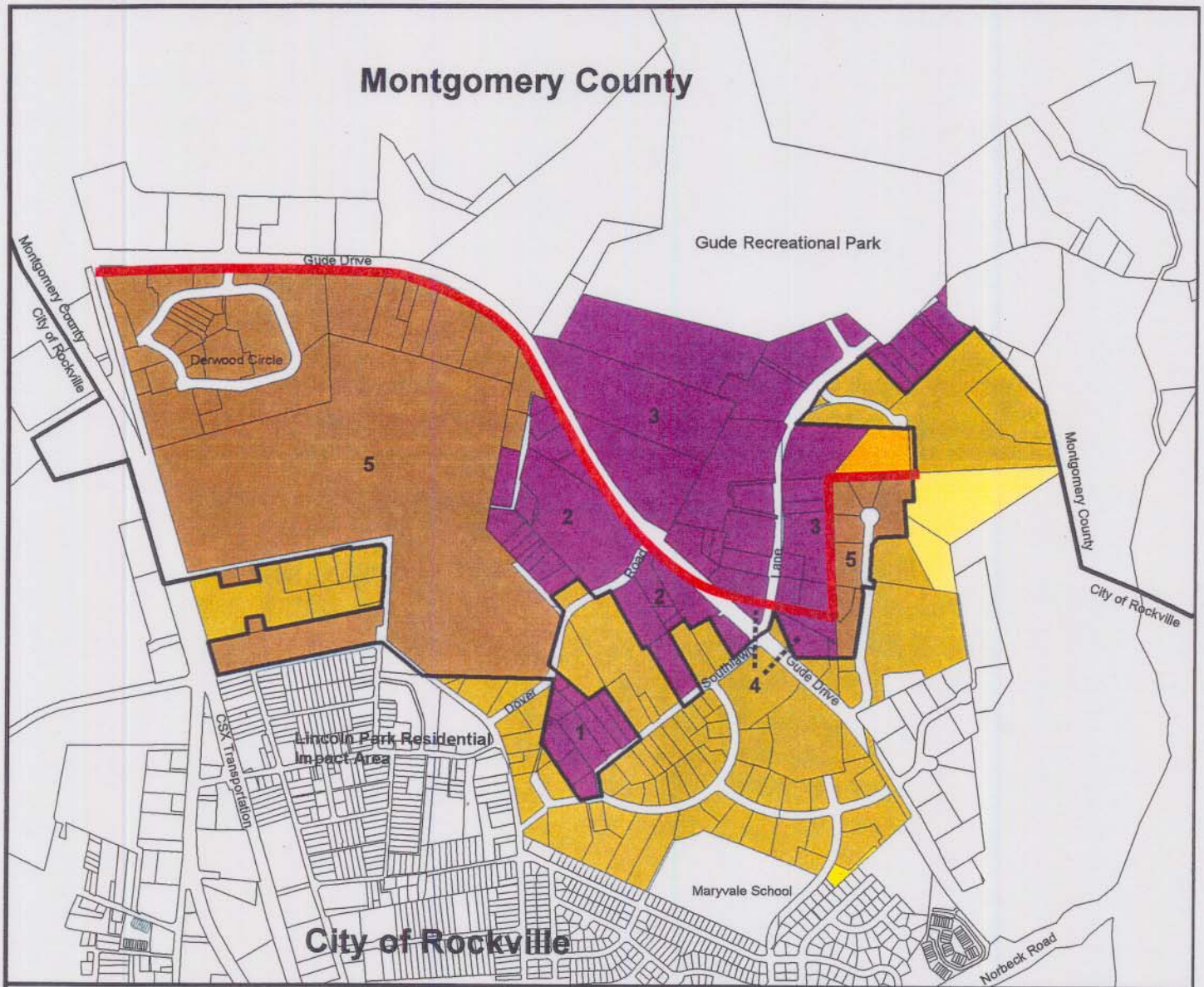
4. The County has not increased the inventory of heavy industrial land in recent years. Recent master plans have either eliminated heavy industrial uses entirely, as occurred in the Westbard Sector Plan, or created overlay districts with the intent of mixing office, commercial and industrial uses in a specified area, as occurred in the Fairland Master Plan. This suggests that it will be extremely difficult to designate additional I-2 land.

Conclusions and Policy Recommendation

This paper concludes: 1) that the County and City zones are dissimilar in the ranges of activity they permit; 2) that it is essential to maintain as much of the current I-2 land as possible in the study area because most land in the I-2 Zone outside the study area is devoted to a narrow range of uses that, in most cases, is likely to continue for some time; 3) that heavy industrial activities play a small but consistent role in the overall economy; and 4) that recent master plans for areas with I-2 zoned land have taken a mixed approach to maintaining the inventory.

These conclusions underscore the need to maintain an inventory of land for heavy industrial uses in Montgomery County. Some heavy industrial uses, concrete mixing and

Proposed Policy Boundary



— Proposed policy boundary

1 See text

Rockville-Montgomery Boundary

Zoning

- I-1 Light Industrial
- I-2 Heavy Industrial
- I-4 Low Intensity Light Industrial
- I-1 Rockville Service Industrial
- R-75 Rockville One-Family Detached
- R-S Rockville Suburban Residential



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Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane Special Study

heavy construction for example, provide a commodity needed for continuing development at a reasonable cost. Moreover, opportunities for these, and other heavy manufacturing businesses, should not be foreclosed by reducing significantly the amount of land available for them, particularly in light of the likely difficulties involved in creating additional land for heavy industry. At the same time, it should be recognized that Montgomery County's heavy industrial zone also permits a range of light industrial and warehousing uses, and that in some parts of the primary study area, less intense industrial uses are prevalent.

Based on the foregoing analysis and conclusions, this paper proposes a new policy boundary line for maintaining and protecting the county's I-2 land in the study area. Annexation requests for properties on the County side of the policy line that proposed reclassification to the City's I-1 Zone would be considered inconsistent with the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan. The proposed policy boundary is shown on the accompanying map and is described as follows:

Annexation petitions from property owners in the unincorporated area west of Gude Drive and south of Dover Road (Areas 1 and 2 of the Proposed Policy Boundary Map) that propose light industrial land uses may be considered consistent with the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan, recognizing that light industrial uses permitted in the I-2 Zone prevail in this area.

The unincorporated area east of Gude Drive (Area 3) retains a heavy industrial character and petitions proposing light industrial land uses should be considered inconsistent with the Master Plan. The existing retail center in the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Gude Drive and Southlawn Lane (located in Area 4), is suitable for light industrial or other service industrial activities. The Fanaroff property, in the northeast quadrant of the intersection was recently approved for the City's I-1 Zone by the Montgomery County Council.

Remaining portions of the study area, including the area along Rothgeb Drive and the vicinity of the Washington Gas Light property, are in the County's I-1 Zone (Area 5). Annexation petitions from this area can be considered consistent with the Plan. The Upper Rock Creek Master Plan supports a review of alternative land uses for properties in this area in the event of a petition for annexation.

This paper makes no recommendations for zoning reclassifications; the comprehensive analysis needed to propose such recommendations can be done as part of the upcoming update of the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan. The Master Plan update should also examine environmental issues in this area. The Comprehensive Stream Protection Strategy recognizes that the existing industrial area has had a negative impact on water quality in Southlawn Branch of Rock Creek resulting from high levels of imperviousness and the absence of stormwater management controls in the area. Evaluation may include

examination of stormwater runoff issues and the feasibility of putting into place best management practices to reduce discharges from industrial sites.

Within the study area, this paper recommends that the City and County undertake a cooperative effort to expand provision of public water and sewer service. Many properties in the area still have well water and septic disposal systems, which limits them to small scale uses and may restrict their full development potential. Expansion of water and sewer service could encourage revitalization of the area. More generally, this paper recommends continued efforts to expand the inventory of I-2 land throughout the County. As master plans are updated, industrial areas should be evaluated for potential additions to the I-2 inventory. The City of Rockville also has indicated that it may consider creation of a zone that would be compatible with the County's I-2 Zone.



Resolution No.: 14-260
Introduced: August 3, 1999
Adopted: August 3, 1999

**COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
SITTING AS THE DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR THAT PORTION
OF THE MARYLAND-WASHINGTON REGIONAL DISTRICT
WITHIN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**



By: District Council

Subject: Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane Area Industrial Study

Background

The Planning Board and the Mayor and City Council of Rockville, at the request of the County Council, have prepared a joint study of the Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane Industrial Area that establishes a policy boundary line for considering City of Rockville requests for authority to reclassify annexed property from the County's I-2 zone to the City's I-1 zone.

2. Under the proposed policy, properties generally east of the policy boundary line would be considered inconsistent with the 1985 Upper Rock Creek Master Plan and not appropriate for reclassification to the City's I-1 zone. Properties generally west of the policy line would be considered appropriate for reclassification to the City's I-1 zone.
3. The study is endorsed by the Planning Board and the City of Rockville as the policy basis for reviewing annexations of heavy industrially zoned land in the Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane area. Both parties agree that the study addresses two important issues:
(1) maintaining a critical inventory of land zoned for heavy industrial use in the County, and (2) protecting the Lincoln Park community.
4. The Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee reviewed the Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane Industrial Study and recommended to the Council that the study be approved as an interim policy for determining which properties, after annexation, in the Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane area are appropriate for reclassification from the County's I-2 zone to the City's I-1 zone. Under the Committee's recommendation, the study would provide policy guidance for reclassification of annexed land in the study area, until the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan, which began in July, 1999, is completed. The Committee also recommended that petitions in the study area consistent with the proposed annexation policy not be required to come to the Council for express approval for the property to be placed in the City's I-1 zone.

5. On August 3, 1999 the County Council reviewed the Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane Industrial Study and agreed with the recommendation of the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, sitting as the District Council for that portion of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

- The Gude Drive-Southlawn Industrial Study, dated April 1999, is approved as the interim policy for determining which properties, after annexation, in the Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane area are appropriate for reclassification from the County's I-2 zone to the City of Rockville's I-1 zone. Properties generally east of the policy boundary line are inconsistent with the 1985 Upper Rock Creek Master Plan and not appropriate for reclassification to the City's I-1 zone. Properties generally west of the policy line are considered appropriate for reclassification to the City's I-1 zone, and not required to come to the Council to receive express approval for reclassification to the City's I-1 zone. The Gude Drive-Southlawn Industrial Study will be reviewed and updated in connection with Upper Rock Creek Master Plan, which began, in July, 1999.

This is a correct copy of Council action.


Mary A. Edgar, CMC
Clerk of the Council



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

MCPB
Item # 2
5/6/99

April 29, 1999

MEMORANDUM

Montgomery County Planning Board

John Carter, Acting Chief *AC*
Community-Based Planning Division

Khalid Afzal, Team Leader, Georgia Avenue Team
Community-Based Planning Division *KA*



FROM: Frederick Vernon Boyd, for the Department of Park and Planning (301-495-4654) *FVB*

SUBJECT: Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane Special Study

RECOMMENDATION Approval of a proposed policy for annexations in the study area

We are attaching a draft paper that proposes a policy for the Montgomery County Planning Board and the Montgomery County Council to use in reviewing annexations of land zoned for heavy industrial uses in the Gude Drive-Southlawn Lane area. It is the result of a review of heavy industrial uses in the study area and throughout the County and it includes an analysis of land use and zoning patterns in the study area. The paper recommends parts of the study area that should be maintained for heavy industrial uses and indicates those areas that are more suitable for light industrial uses. The paper creates a "policy line" delineating those areas.

This paper has been jointly prepared by the Georgia Avenue Planning Team and the City's Department of Community Planning and Development Services, as directed by the County Council last year. We will join City staff in presenting the policy paper to the City's Planning Commission on May 5, which will be followed by a discussion of the proposed policy with the Rockville Mayor and City Council and by the County Council.

We are requesting the Board to approve the proposed policy boundary and to forward the policy paper to the City and the County Council.

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Attachment

Executive Summary

This paper proposes a policy for the City of Rockville, the Montgomery County Planning Board and the Montgomery County Council to use in reviewing annexations of land zoned for heavy industrial uses in the Gude Drive–Southlawn Lane area. The policy is based primarily on the availability of heavy industrial land in the County and an analysis of land use and zoning patterns in the study area. The analysis focuses on differentiating light industrial from heavy industrial activities and includes reviews of other issues—comparison of industrial zones in the City and the County; countywide land use patterns in the County's heavy industrial zone; local trends in heavy industrial activities; and the treatment of heavy industrial land uses in County master plans.

The paper's review of land use and zoning patterns in the study area determines that light industrial activities are found throughout the study area, in both the County's heavy industrial zone and the City's service industrial zone, which allows a range of light industrial, service and retail uses but few heavy industrial uses. It concludes that two areas in particular—the area bounded by Gude Drive, Dover Road and the Old Dover Road right-of-way, and an area south of Dover Road and north of Southlawn Lane—are predominantly light industrial in character. A third area along Southlawn Lane east of Gude Drive is primarily heavy industrial in character.

Analysis of the City's Service Industrial (I-1) Zone and the County's Heavy Industrial (I-2) Zone confirms an initial hypothesis that the two zones are dissimilar in the ranges of uses they permit and shows that the City zone is tailored to light industrial and service uses. A look at other I-2 zoned land in the County shows that the majority of this land is devoted to mineral extraction or utility operations and that the study area is the only part of the county with zoning, ownership and use patterns suitable for heavy industrial activities. Those activities represent a small share of the County's overall economy, but a share that has been stable over time and represents an important ongoing contribution to the local economy.

Finally, County master plans have, over time, taken a mixed approach to heavy industrial uses. Some plans covering areas with existing heavy industrial uses have recommended that those activities continue. Others have created overlay zones that allow heavy industrial uses to continue, but also encourage other commercial and retail uses. And in one significant case, a master plan recommended reclassification of all heavy industrial land in a planning area to light industrial or commercial zones. This history suggests that finding more land in the County for heavy industry will be extremely difficult.

The paper proposes a policy of supporting annexations in the part of the study area west of Gude Drive because the generally light industrial character of the area is in keeping with the City's Service Industrial Zone. It recommends that all of the area east of Gude Drive except the immediate intersection of Gude Drive and Southlawn Lane remain in the County's heavy industrial zone, or be placed in a comparable zone that could be proposed by the City, as a means of retaining land for such uses.